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WILLIAM F. WELD
Governor

ARGEO PAUL CELLUCCI
Lt. Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

ONE WINTER STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108 617-292-5500

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TRUDY COXE
Secretary

DAVID B. STRUHS
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CHANGES TO THE TITLE 5 LARGE SYSTEM INSPECTION SCHEDULES

To interested parties:

This letter explains important changes to the Title 5 large system inspection requirements for the subsurface disposal of sanitary sewage. These changes affect all property owners with large systems. If these changes affect you directly, please take note. If you represent a group or are a member of a group affected by these changes, we ask that you circulate this information through your organization's newsletter, meetings, or other general correspondence.

Through a cooperative effort with you, the Department will be able to address this important component of groundwater protection. As the Department assesses watersheds on the schedule described below, it makes sense to view these larger subsurface sewage disposal systems in light of other inputs within that watershed.

Large System Inspections

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection reminds property owners for which the total design flow of all subsurface systems combined is 10,000 gallons per day (gpd) or greater, the December 1, 1996 deadline for having the systems inspected has been extended. There are exceptions for certain condominiums discussed later.

By an act of the legislature, inspection deadlines will be phased in over the next five years to coincide with other DEP activities in Massachusetts' 27 major watersheds. Under the new schedule, large systems located in each of the following watersheds will have to be inspected by December 31 of the respective year:

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1997 | Charles River, Housatonic River, Hudson (Hoosic) River, Ten Mile River, and North Coastal watersheds |
| 1998 | Blackstone River, Chicopee River, Connecticut River, and Nashua River watersheds |
| 1999 | Boston Harbor (Weymouth/Weir, Mystic, and Neponset Rivers), Cape Cod, Narraganset Bay/Mount Hope Bay, French and Quinebaug Rivers, Merrimack River, and Parker River watersheds |
| 2000 | Buzzards Bay, Deerfield River, Ipswich River, and Islands watersheds |
| 2001 | Millers River, Shawsheen River, Concord (Sudbury, Assabet, Concord), Farmington River, South Coastal River, Taunton River, and Westfield River watersheds |

Condominium System Inspections

As a result of another act of the legislature, septic systems in existence as of December 31, 1995 serving condominiums will be viewed as separate facilities. Therefore, for inspection purposes, condo complexes comprised of 5 units or more for which each of the individual septic systems is under 10,000 gpd, even if the total combined flow is 10,000 gpd or greater, will not be affected by the new watershed inspection schedule and must still be inspected by December 1, 1996, and every three years thereafter.

Those condominium complexes with any individual system with a design flow of 10,000 gpd or greater will perform their system inspection on the watershed schedule, as described above. Condominiums with a combination of large and small systems will also inspect all their systems on the watershed schedule.

For condo complexes with fewer than 5 units and septic systems less than 10,000 gpd, the inspection schedule remains unchanged from the regulations. These small condo complexes still have a choice to either have all their system inspected by December 1, 1996 and every three years thereafter or choose to have just the system serving a unit inspected prior to the time of transfer of that unit.

After Inspection

Upon completion of a large system inspection, the property owner as well as the system inspector must file the inspection report with the appropriate DEP Regional Office. The report must be filed within 30 days of inspection and a copy should be sent to the Board of Health.

If a system is found to be failing or is a threat to public health, safety or the environment, it will have to be repaired, upgraded or replaced, depending on the nature of the problem. The timeframe for performing those actions which involve large systems may vary up to five years. If large system modifications are required, DEP, through its Regional Offices, is the approving authority and will determine the appropriate timeframe for these modifications.

Questions

Property owners who aren't sure which watershed they are located in, or uncertain about whether theirs is a large system (see example below), should call DEP's **Title 5 Hotline at 800-266-1122**.

Examples of Facilities with Design Flows of 10,000 gpd or Greater

<u>Type of Property</u>	<u>Size</u>
1. Restaurant	more than 285 seats
Fast food restaurant	500 seats or more
Thruway service area restaurant	more than 66 seats
2. Hotel, Motel, Condominiums or Apartments	more than 90 bedrooms
3. Nursing Homes, Rest Homes	more than 66 beds
4. Mobile Home Community (Family)	more than 33 trailers
5. Mobile Home Community (Retirement)	more than 66 trailers
6. Elementary Schools	
a. no cafeteria, with gym/showers	2,000 students & staff or more
b. cafeteria, no gym/showers	1,250 students & staff or more
c. with cafeteria, gym/showers	1,000 students & staff or more
7. Secondary Schools	
a. no cafeteria, with gym/showers	1,000 students & staff or more
b. with cafeteria, no gym/showers	over 666 students & staff
c. with cafeteria, gym/showers	500 students & staff or more
8. Boarding Schools	over 153 students & staff
9. Office Buildings	over 133,000 square feet
10. Commercial Plaza (Retail only)	200,000 square feet or more
11. Campgrounds	more than 111 sites

for those particular types of establishments not listed above, check the Title 5 regulations (310 CMR 15.203) for the applicable design flow to be used to calculate the size of the facility or system

